

Life of the Spirit

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Editorial

How many of our readers will ever have heard a sermon on the Trinity? The central Christian mystery often seems to be thought too abstract, too remote from the realities of parish life to interest any but the professional theologians in the seminary. Yet where such a feeling becomes widespread, as was the case in England immediately before the Reformation, the danger to faith is far greater than any external enemy can offer, far greater for example today than the threat of communism. Indeed the real threat of the communists does not lie in their power to persecute so much as in their power to offer a way of life more vital and therefore more attractive than a Catholicism which has come to look merely negative by comparison. Like all important human conflicts, the struggle in which we are engaged today is first of all taking place at the level of mind: and to suppose that theology has nothing to do with real life is to say that ultimately the mind is unimportant.

The doctrine of the Trinity provides something of a test for us. What, for instance, do we think of the men who in the fourth century considered it worth while to turn the world upside-down over the difference of a syllable in its formulation? Were they barbarous and illiberal, as the enlightened Gibbon presents them to us, or had they grasped something we are in danger of forgetting? Again, what do we make of the fact that those Catholics who speak about religion at street-corners and in the market-place find in the doctrine of the Trinity the subject most certain to draw in crowds of people eager to be informed? And would we have cared to be among that group of London University students who in St Patrick's Church, Soho, listened to the conference on which our first article this month is based? Do we, in short, recognize in the revelation of the inner life of God the pattern of our own lives, made by grace sons of God in his Son through the power of the Holy Spirit? The future of the world may well depend on the way in which we are able to answer questions such as these.

The Mystery of the Trinity

KENELM FOSTER, O.P.

No one knows the Son but the Father, and no one knows the Father but the Son and he to whom the Son chooses to reveal him (Matthew II. 27).

It hardly needs saying that it is not easy to write about the Trinity, at least if one aims at being intelligible as well as verbally accurate. Yet this mysterious doctrine is certainly not of merely intellectual or speculative interest, with no bearing on practice. Quite the contrary. The fascination it has had for the greatest Christian minds—St Augustine's for example or St Thomas's—has not been primarily the fascination of a mere problem. These saints, in their endeavour to see as clearly as possible into the mystery of the three Persons, and even while they were perfectly aware that the reasoning that this effort entailed was too subtle to be followed by the majority of believers, never thought of themselves as engaged in a merely theoretical enquiry. They reasoned about the mystery as masters of Christian doctrine, but the mystery itself they knew as intimately involved in their own moral and religious lives, in their daily communion with Christ. So it was for them; so it may be, in some measure, for us. But why then, one might object, is the doctrine so difficult? If it is really so important, why is it such a puzzle to the mind? But a doctrine may be dauntingly difficult from one point of view, that of pure reason, and immensely stimulating from another, that of religion. True religion is having a right attitude to God, and the first condition of this is to have a worthy idea of God; and in this respect no idea of God can compare with the idea of the Trinity. It has a unique richness and sublimity. This might be shown in a number of ways—for example, by starting from the idea of life. The idea of the Trinity, which sets such delicate problems for the logician, is, regarded simply as an idea, only the idea of life developed to the utmost—developed so far indeed that if God had not told us that he was alive to such a degree we should never, it seems, have even conceived of a life so superabundant, and we should certainly never have known that it was realised in fact. We know now, by revelation, that life exists at a degree of vitality surpassing anything that we had dreamed of. And even now that we know this, it still surpasses our

comprehension; and this not primarily because of the logical difficulties involved—these are consequent on, not prior to revelation—but because of the sublimity of the fact itself.

The fact itself: I lay the stress here to offset the common error of perspective that comes from thinking of God only or chiefly as the cause of the universe. It is true that we only *know* about God through the universe, through his effects. Even the Christian revelation comes to us through one of God's effects, the humanity of our Lord. But in reality, in being, it is God who exists first, prior in nature (not time) to all his effects: which is why the human mind can only so inadequately understand him. It can only partly represent God to itself because it is itself only a partial representation of God. And this because it is a creature. Being is first of all the divine being, of which all creatures are only incomparably small traces and signs. And so too with life. It is first of all divine life; a vitality incomparably greater than ours or any creature's; so great that in order to have any idea of it our minds had first to be expanded, so to say, by the divine Word come to dwell amongst us. And what this Word tells us of the divine life is precisely the mystery of the Trinity.

But again, he has not told us this as mere information. His telling of it is at the same time a calling us to enter and share it. The revelation of the Trinity is integral to that historical act whereby God delivers man from sin and death. 'Why', asks St Thomas, 'was the Trinity revealed?'; and he replies, 'principally to give us a right understanding of the salvation of the human race, which is effected by the incarnate Son and the gift of the Holy Spirit'.¹ As then we are saved by the Son made man and by the Spirit, so we can have no true notion of our salvation—of this dying to sin and living to God which is Christianity—except we have a true notion of the Son, and consequently of the Father; and of the Spirit, and consequently of the Father and the Son from whom the Spirit proceeds. The three Persons are the principal co-operating agents in our rebirth to life in that godhead which they are; a rebirth entailing the conscious recognition of them which is our faith. The Christian God *is* the three Persons; hence whoever does not know them, in some degree, is simply not a Christian. And the more knowledge of course the better, so long as it is not the sort that St Paul described as 'inflating'. Let us then try to add a little to our knowledge.

The word 'trinity' is not found in the New Testament, although the gospel-message is all in terms of the Father, the Son and the Spirit;

¹*Summa Theologiae* Ia. 32. I ad 3.

witness the closing words of Matthew, which put the trinitarian formula for baptism into the mouth of Christ himself. And in course of time the Church came to give explicit expression to her faith that the Lord, in disclosing the secret of his person and mission to the apostles, had introduced them to the mystery of the three Persons. He is the Son sent by the Father to communicate their common Spirit. The earliest creeds repeat these three terms of some mysterious inter-change in the godhead; and it was largely from the questioning that this dogma in particular inevitably provoked that theology arose, the effort to explore the Christian mystery rationally; and this either within the Catholic faith and subject to authority, or with a more or less open claim to independence. It was natural that the first great heresies to trouble the Church should have been heresies about the Trinity.

These were broadly of two main types which represent the two opposed extremes towards which reason, unless it heeds the Church, will always tend in this matter. On the one hand there was the attempt to 'save' the unity of the godhead by reducing Father, Son and Spirit to three mere modes or aspects of God, corresponding respectively to his action as creator, redeemer and sanctifier. This was Sabellian Modalism, the denial of any real distinction between the three Persons. On the other side arose the heresy by excessive division, dividing the being of the Son from that of the Father and the Spirit's from both; and since the Father was admittedly God, the Son and the Spirit had to be thought of as his created effects. This (as regards at least the creation of the Son) was the heresy of Arius, condemned at the council of Nicaea in 325, in terms which have remained in the creed we recite at mass.

The Catholic theology of the Trinity has owed most, in the West, to Augustine and Aquinas. It hinges essentially on three ideas: of immanent spiritual activity (knowledge and love); of relation; and of personality. To be of use to theology each of these notions has had to be drawn out by very careful analysis to a point at which it becomes capable of being predicated of God in such a way as to retain the distinction of the three Persons without prejudice to their identity in one undivided godhead. There is no question for Catholic theology, at least since St Thomas, of proving the existence of the Trinity, or even of perfectly understanding it as an idea; but only of showing that it is not high-sounding nonsense. This may seem a small result of so much rational effort, but it is as much as the Church expects from human reason where a mystery of the faith is concerned: from her point of view the highest exercise of reason is to show that a revealed dogma is not irrational.

But there is is, in fact, no task that can so test the mind's resources.

As regards the Trinity, reason's first task is to show it as conceivable that within the godhead there is an activity which may properly be called *generation*, the coming forth of an offspring distinct in some way from its source; and also the conceivability of a second vital activity in God, a second issuing forth distinct from the first one. The concept used here is 'immanent activity'; that is, an activity that both originates in and terminates in the agent. Such activity is vital (indeed vital *par excellence*) if it is proper to distinguish living from non-living things on the principle that while the latter are moved and move as it were mechanically—from outside themselves and *upon* that which is outside themselves—the former, animate things, act spontaneously from within themselves and towards ends which, to some extent and in varying degrees, connote an increase of being and perfection *in* themselves. There are of course many degrees of life; but, on this view, life is always measured as more or less in a given subject, in terms of the subject's spontaneity in action and capacity for active self-increase. Thus there is more life in animals than in plants, and more in man than in animals. The test of life is immanent activity; and since the best example we have of this is the human mind itself, as we experience it in our own knowing and loving, the mind is the model usually preferred by theologians in speaking of the Trinity, since St Augustine wrote his *De Trinitate*.

If God is spirit, he knows and loves; if he is absolute spirit, his knowledge and love must bear on himself, in utter independence of any lesser object. Now the term of knowledge as such is an expression of an object by and in the knower; and this expression theologians call the mind's 'word' (*verbum mentis*), in deference to St John's use of this term in the prologue to his Gospel. The immanent term of love is more obscure. If I love Peter, Peter is somehow in me as affecting me; but not precisely in the way that he is in me by my knowing him. The difference may be put, rather crudely, by saying that inasmuch as I know Peter I bring him into myself, whereas inasmuch as I love Peter I am myself brought to him. Both knowledge and love are relations to being, a 'being *to*' something; but to know is to 'be *to*' a being *as* that being, while to love is to 'be *to*' a being *as to* that being—it is a sort of going out to the loved one in himself, not a sort of turning him into oneself as when one merely knows him. From this distinction two consequences follow in theology. First, if God's knowledge is a 'being *to*' himself *as* himself, then its expression, the Word, may properly be

called an 'as God'; it has the character of a divine *likeness*. And as this likeness issues from God's vitality and is by definition an absolutely perfect likeness, we can see that the process of its issuing forth in God may be represented, analogically, by a father's begetting of a son. This is not to demonstrate the Persons of Father and Son in God; it is merely to find a valid created analogy for this particular datum of our faith.

The second consequence concerns the distinction between knowing and loving, and so between the Word, the proper term of God's knowing, and the Spirit, the term of his loving. Love, we have said, goes out to an object as it is in itself; but we must add that it cannot do this unless that object first affect, somehow, the subject loving in *itself*—unless, that is, the object has first inhered in the subject by being known by it. I cannot love Peter if I have not, first, at least some knowledge of him. In God, it is true, knowledge and love are absolutely one thing, one essence. Yet in God too there is verified an order of love to knowledge in respect of the *term* of each. In God too the condition of loving is knowing. He loves himself as he sees himself. He is lovingly affected by himself because he is knowingly affected by himself. And the two ways of being 'affected' are distinct: the knowing way is a perfect likeness of God in God (the Word or Son), the loving way is a perfect cleaving to God of God, conditional on that likeness. So, although in God knowledge and love are the same thing, we can distinguish between the issue of his loving and the issue of his knowing. *This* is a word, a likeness, a Son; *that* is something from our point of view more mysterious. Our faith calls it the Holy Spirit, the third Person; and our theology, using the analogy of knowledge and love as we experience them, is just able to conceive—but only just—how the Spirit can issue from and within the divine life and yet be distinct from the Son.

A certain pattern is now emerging, which might be represented as a circling of infinite being upon itself—through a knowledge that expresses it to a love that cleaves to it. The expression is a perfect likeness of the godhead whence it proceeds and in which it dwells; so we have the Father and the Son, distinguished as the godhead communicating and the godhead communicated, in the way of likeness or expression. And the love that necessarily follows on this communication is itself a further, and to us a more obscure, communication of godhead: originating in the Father and the Son, it terminates in an infinite love-presence of the divine nature to itself; and so we have the third Person,

the Spirit, the godhead communicated by way of love. Thus the three terms, Father, Son and Spirit, are constituted by God's infinite self-communication. The common term, to be predicated of all three, is the godhead itself—godhead *only communicating* in the Father, both communicated *and* communicating in the Son, *only communicated* in the Spirit. And the distinction of each Person from the others consists precisely in a relationship inhering in the act of communication, according as this act is originated or received. The Father communicates to the Son, the Son receives from the Father; their relations are reciprocally opposed, each implying the other as its correlative, and therefore these relations are distinct. And the same is true *mutatis mutandis* of the Holy Spirit. The only distinctions in God, then, are the opposed relations consequent on his self-communication. Yet the Catholic faith insists, against 'modalism', that these relationships are *real*, are not distinctions introduced only by our thinking about God. And this follows from the reality of the self-communication. The Father communicates godhead to the Son, but this would not be a real communication were the two terms of it not real and therefore really distinct. So the Father communicates godhead to the Son, but without fatherhood; and the Son receives godhead from the Father precisely as his Son; and Father and Son communicate godhead to the Spirit without fatherhood and sonhood; and the Spirit receives the godhead precisely as its receiver in his own way, which is distinct from the Son's way. Does it follow then that each Person has the godhead in a different way? Yes, we can say even this, provided the term 'way' be referred strictly and exclusively to each relationship precisely as such: 'the divine essence', says St Thomas, 'is not in the Father and the Son in the same way (*in eodem modo*); but it is in the Son as received from another, in the Father as *not* received from another'.

But we are not yet at the end of the matter. For we seem to be saying that the Father has something, namely fatherhood, which is lacking to the Son, and so making the Son *less* than the Father; which is impossible if the Son is truly God. There is only one way out of this difficulty and that is to purify the idea of relation until we see it purely and simply as a 'being to something'—not as a thing or a part of a thing, but a pure 'being-to-ness'. It is true that in me, for example, my relation to you, my reader, is something added to my individual essence; to speak scholastically, it is an 'accident' in me due to the fact that I am the writer and you the reader. But the pure idea of relationship need not connote any such accident in or addition to the thing related; it con-

notes as such purely a 'being to' something; and as transposed into God it can be simply identified with the divine essence of which it is predicated; indeed it has to be since there is nothing in God except God. Therefore the relation of fatherhood in God is God; and equally the relation of sonhood is God; and equally that of Father and Son to the Spirit is God; and that of the Spirit to them is God. Hence we can assert that *God is both absolute and relative*; absolute as self-existing, relative as self-communicating. And both terms refer to the same one reality; only, as the self-communication is real, it must really involve several distinct correlatives: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Evidently Catholic trinitarian theology is not afraid of difficulties! It has taken the hard way; a much harder way, intellectually, than modalism or Arianism. These are facile rationalisations of the mystery. In a sense our theology too is a rationalisation; it is the endeavour to purify dogma of irrationalities coming in from the human side. But it is not in the least facile. Strictly faithful to the revealed datum, however baffling this may seem at first sight—and indeed must always, in part, remain to our mind that for the present knows, as St Paul said, only 'in part'—Catholic theology has been extremely bold in exploring and determining so much of the divine mystery as can be made knowable by analogy with its created effects. This boldness has been partly indicated already; it may appear still more clearly if we now consider—very briefly and by way of conclusion—the relevance of our third key-idea in this matter of the Trinity, the notion of personality.

Our chief aim so far has been to outline the way in which trinitarian theology safeguards the divine unity by identifying Father, Son and Spirit with pure relations in the godhead. But this line of thought, while it safeguards the divine unity, must not be allowed to blur the divine three-ness; and it is chiefly in order to bring out this three-ness as clearly as possible that Western theology has elaborated, with great subtlety, the concept of the person. We cannot dwell on the subtleties here; the main, the essential point to bear in mind is that 'personality' comes into trinitarian theology as denoting a *maximum distinctness in being*—a being *oneself* and no one and nothing else. Our ordinary notion of personality connotes something like this, but it refers more directly to a mode of activity than to existence; to be able to reason and to choose freely and responsibly are, we assume, what constitutes a person as such. And to be sure, rationality (or better, intellectuality) is of the essence of personality; but this is so, for theology, precisely because the possession of intelligence confers a special *autonomy* on the

subject that has it, and so a special distinctness from everything else. It is this note of distinctness that St Thomas seizes upon as soon as he introduces the notion of *persona* into his discussion of the Trinity in the *Summa*. As we read his analysis of *persona* it very soon becomes clear that he is bent on drawing out a notion of maximum distinctness which he will then apply, analogically, to each Person in the godhead—to each as himself in distinction from the other two. Let us see, briefly, what this argument entails.

It entails in general a certain convergence, up the scale of existence, of being and unity; so that the more perfect a thing is the more one, in the sense of self-identical, it is. Everything that has being is *ipso facto* a unity; existence always confers a self-identity. Now existence in God is simply identical with essence; therefore self-identity in God is absolute; and so too God is supremely 'distinct'—not that he is not anything other than himself, but rather that he pre-contains and yet infinitely transcends all that anything else is; his distinctness is wholly *positive*. This is to draw out the notion of distinctness in terms of being. In terms of activity we can see distinctness emerging increasingly as we pass up the scale from inanimate things to the world of life where, as we have noted, activity discloses a certain immanence or self-sufficiency. This reaches the point of greatest intensity known to us in the rational soul. By intelligence the soul is self-conscious and, in some measure, self-determining: as self-conscious its action returns upon and dwells in itself in a special way, the subject is its own object; as self-determining its actions proceed from itself. Thus the rational soul displays a new and higher degree of selfhood, of distinctness, of singularity as St Thomas says, and one to which a special name is given, 'and this name is "person"' (Ia. 29. 1).

If at this point I venture to take the analysis a step or two further, it is not, let me warn the reader, that I expect the further distinctions I shall propose to solve all difficulties in advance. That would be naivety indeed. I want simply to end by suggesting a line of thought that may be found helpful as an approach to the mystery of the distinction of the Persons in God. This line starts, then, from a further consideration of human personality. When I say John is a person, I do not refer—speaking very precisely—to his human *nature*; not, it is clear, to the nature he shares with all other men, for this lacks the singularity connoted by 'a person'; nor even (though this is not so clear) to his nature as individual; for this is not *who* John is but that by which he is, immediately, *what* he is—a man, an individual of the human race. Personality says

'who', not 'what'. It refers directly not to a *kind* of thing, but to a *subject* of a given kind. But neither does it refer directly to John's act of existing; for then John's most intimate selfhood would simply be this act and so would exist of itself, which would amount to saying that John was God. So in the last analysis created personality seems to be a mysterious 'x' by which an individual and rational subject is able to exist as this subject and not any other subject; it might be called the existential subjectivity of *this* rational being. Subjectivity is the crucial term here—meaning distinctness, incommunicability in being, but in a given nature, a nature capable of thought and volition. Now suppose we transpose this notion of utter distinctness, yet in a given nature, to God. We need an idea that will preserve the distinctness of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, and yet enable us to contemplate them in one divine nature. And only the notion of person, sufficiently purified, seems apt for the purpose. In virtue of the positive distinctness it connotes, the term 'person' can be used, as no other could be used, to signify each relative term in God—Father, Son, Spirit—and yet not precisely or merely as relative, but rather as existing substantially and positively in the divine nature. To see what it means to say that God is distinct from creatures, we use the notion of divine nature; to get some inkling of what it means to say that God is distinct *relative to himself*, we use a notion of divine personality. But it leaves us, of course, still looking into the enigmatic 'mirror' that St Paul spoke of; still faced by the ultimate mystery.

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RIVER FOREST, ILLINOIS

Changes in the Liturgy:

Cri de Coeur

MAISIE WARD

Orate fratres, says the priest — 'Pray brethren, that this sacrifice which is mine and yours may be acceptable'. So the congregation is offering the sacrifice of the mass with the priest. We are not simply there, we are taking part. Our part is subsidiary, certainly, but it is not just a fiction

or a façade, it is real. Therefore, we should think about it and utter our thoughts. We have a subsidiary part in the offering, we should make our subsidiary contribution to the discussion of the mass which is now everywhere being carried on. We have been co-offering, sub-offering, for nineteen hundred years. I have sometimes asked myself 'Doesn't anybody wonder what we think?' And now an editor has asked me.

It may seem surprising that the liturgical education of my childhood was as good as it was—for my first eleven years belong to that very unliturgical period, the nineteenth century. Yet I can hardly remember, from the time I could read, being unable to find my places in a missal. I took a keen pleasure in Holy Week services, instructed therein by my father when he was not away at St Edmund's College, with his fine voice and his musical knowledge, helping the President, Bernard Ward, who was his brother. I think it is sometimes too lightly assumed that liturgy for the laity only started of recent years. There are plenty of us who rather dislike being told that Holy Week was 'given back' to us when the Easter Vigil was restored and a few alterations made in a liturgy which we could say almost by heart, so long had we been devoted to it.

The liturgical movement may have been a revolution for laity of the rosary-at-mass variety, but there are many others who were already doing all they could to participate, and longing to be allowed to do more. Indeed it was a group of laymen in Germany, inspired by Belgium, who were perhaps the most important influence in today's revival.

Belgium and Germany—1914—evokes a dark picture of marching soldiers, slaughter, suffering, oppression, perhaps of the beginning of the end of our civilisation. St Gregory, in an age of even greater darkness, believed the sack of Rome to be the beginning of an end even more final. The end of Rome meant, in his eyes, the end also of the world and of the whole race of man. He laboured for the conversion of the barbarians but his letters reflect what was, on the natural level, his despair. The death of the Roman Empire was the first signal of the final judgment upon a world already dead in the hearts of men: even its joys had palled, *in corde arruerat* he said. Yet many historians today see Gregory, labouring for the conversion of Franks and Anglo-Saxons, more as the herald of a new age than as the last hope of old Rome.

As we look on the years that have followed 1914 we must indeed see

that August as fateful. But what are the important events of history? Belgium had begun in 1909 a movement of vital significance taken up in Germany in 1914 and these two countries, the invaded and the invader, have co-operated in something that may well prove a greater force for good than the carnage of the first world war was for destruction.

Pius X had indicated the need for a new liturgical movement, when he restored early and frequent communion, when he urged congregational singing; but his invitation for a real lay participation in the central act of the liturgy was only very slowly accepted. Frequent communion did begin at once; but in Italy itself and most other European countries this meant, as I well remember, a priest rushing to the Blessed Sacrament chapel every half hour, in some churches even every time anyone chose to ring a bell, and distributing communion with no relation to the masses going on at perhaps half a dozen altars in the larger churches. In small churches communion was given out before and after—but seldom in its proper place in the mass.

Congregational singing fared rather better though still remaining a rarity. But in Belgium a real movement had begun, mainly directed by Dom Lambert Baudoin, promoting the dialogue mass and the use of the missal. In 1909 he put forward his ideas at the Catholic Congress at Malines; in 1914 he published his book *La Piété de l'Eglise*. And before the war in this same year came the meeting of laymen at Maria Laach where the German movement may be said to have started. Here was a great Benedictine monastery whose abbot, Ildefonsus Herwegen, was deeply concerned with the liturgy as the centre of the religious life. The Abbey could not fail in itself to give a deep inspiration, the Abbot's presence to insure wise guidance—but I love to think that it was a group of laymen—doctors, lawyers, university professors—who were the heart of the German movement for a greater lay participation. And I believe, though I shall not live to see its full results, that that Holy Week meeting will go down in world history, if the world by becoming Christian once more is saved from suicide.

Fr Charles Davis, in his brilliant little book, *Liturgy and Doctrine*, mentions the two dangers in a movement of this kind. The first is of too experimental a popular approach: Abbé Michonneau's para-liturgy is perhaps an example of this: Fr Davis speaks of it as a French tendency. Yet France has produced also some of the best examples of a mass liturgy at once instructing the participants and richly expressing their worship. Fr Davis sees as a much greater danger that of an approach remote from the people, aesthetic or antiquarian.

‘Unless we’, he writes, ‘grapple with the raw material of the Christian community as it is here and now with its needs and capabilities, we remain in the field of antiquarian studies and outside that of liturgy. The liturgy is at the centre of the pastoral work of the Church. Interest in the liturgy and study of the liturgy mean interest in the pastoral work of the Church and study of it. That is the angle from which to approach the liturgy and concern ourselves with it’.

Practical parish work is then one chief test of liturgical development; the other is, as the title of Fr Davis’s book implies, theology. And it is an enormous help to remember these two signposts. For one hears too often such a statement as ‘I’m all for some liturgical changes but not for going too far’. What is to be left, what is to be changed, is a question not of the distance so much as of direction and balance. And I think if the small group who tend to lead the movement, at any rate in England, would occasionally *ask* the parish priest or even the laity instead of always *telling* them, balance would be better preserved, direction would be clearer.

The laymen who met in 1914 discussed what they wanted: often very much of it has been given them in many countries. If it is our sacrifice we must both know what is happening and take part in it. The words at the altar should be audible. What mass is being said should be announced, especially if the Proper is not being read in the vernacular. If at all possible we should be able to *see*. For this, modern churches are far better than gothic, with their pillars; an altar at which the priest faces the people far better than one at which his back is turned to them. The dialogue has done more to make the mass understood than anything else in my lifetime; and wherever it is adopted it has swept away such nineteenth century practices as the rosary said aloud at mass, or (even more distressing) the novenas that prevailed in so many American churches—‘For this relief much thanks’.

As to our existing liturgy, my own feeling agrees with what Fr Bevan of the London Oratory once said—that the Roman liturgy is all-but perfect. ‘All I ask’, he said, ‘is that it be given back to the people’. Since then some changes have been made at Rome and therefore everywhere, about which our feelings cannot but vary according to the amount of affection we had for the usage now displaced. I rejoiced especially, as I think did everyone to judge by the vigour with which they do it, at being allowed to utter the *Our Father*. And I smile a little as I remember a liturgical lecturer who before Rome had spoken used to tell his audience ‘The laity will never be allowed to recite the

Our Father. That is the priest's prayer'. As to omissions I am relieved at the cutting down of Collects but view with slight regret the disappearance of the *Confiteor* before Communion (one can never say too often that one is sorry). I have a real regret over two changes: the first being the loss of the creed on the feasts of Doctors when it seemed so deeply suitable—and meant anyhow an extra creed—and above all at losing its quaint and delicious appearance on the feast of St Mary Magdalen, the *apostola apostolorum*, who announced the Resurrection to them. I am sad too to say no longer the Christmas Preface on the feast of Corpus Christi where its midsummer return and its prolongation for a week gave me special delight. These are tiny things but they are like the blossoms in a garden which is not kept *too* tidy, where nature is allowed to be exuberant and not forced to be mathematical.

As one who makes an occasional incursion into the breviary I have the same mixed feelings. Obviously it had got badly overweighted, obviously the dropping of so many Octaves is an immense blessing—but I long to keep those of Corpus Christi and even more of Epiphany with St Leo's glorious lessons and the thought of what the feast has always meant to us who are the gentiles.

These are small matters for joy or grief and one's feelings may well spring chiefly from the habits of sixty years. The one worrying thing about the changes is, to some of us, the way they are received by the little handful of people who may be called the pundits of the liturgical movement, who when anything is changed or dropped cry out that this is only a beginning. Our nerves are kept in a constant state of jitters by the threat that we are going to lose things which mean very much to us, which are immensely helpful to the fullness of our mass, but which are under relentless attack—an attack sometimes delivered by rather unfair methods.

The two principal things under fire are the psalm *Judica* and the *Confiteor* at the beginning of mass, the last gospel at its end. What I feel an unfair method is that these are said by the priest who disapproves of them in a hurried whisper ('as if', said a Jesuit friend of mine 'they were dirty words'). Or again, in one church I know, while the priest and server whisper the opening prayers, hymns are sung to drown them. The remainder of the mass is then dialogued. In a church where the full dialogue is the custom, a visiting priest of this persuasion will whisper the *Confiteor* so low as to make it impossible for the congregation to join in. If you talk to him afterwards he first alleges that his concern is pastoral—the people dialogue better if they begin with the

Kyrie eleison. But anyone could tell him that they do it better in *this* church anyhow if allowed to start in their usual way with the prayers at the foot of the altar.

And I have found this true not in one church alone but all round the world in many churches. In Honolulu, in New Zealand, in the States and in England I have talked to priests of their experiences. An American priest told me he began by begging everyone who had ever served mass to dialogue it. Others have prepared the children in school. The majority have told me that they have experimented both ways and that, after a little trouble has been taken to teach and practise them, congregations do far better with the opening prayers than without them.

But my interlocutor will not go on to discuss whether this is really the fact. He instantly changes his ground: 'These things are no part of the mass. The *Confiteor* and *Judica* used to be part of the priest's private preparation'. The missal seems to indicate that they are now his public preparation—and if a good public preparation for the priest, why not for the people too? They are about to join with the priest in the offering. Why not in this magnificent reminder of his unworthiness and theirs for the greatness of the action which he is about to perform and they with him? But now I am told 'The *Introit* is the preparation for mass. You don't want two preparations. I suppose you will next want a preparation for that preparation and so on for ever'.

At this point I am aware, seriously and sadly, that I and all those who feel with me are simply being treated frivolously; nor is this feeling diminished by my being bombarded with pamphlets which are popularisations of books most of which I have read, some of which our firm has published. Any difference of opinion must, I am given to understand, arise from ignorance on my part. A little teaching would dissipate it. Fr Davis has compared the mass to a family meal, the priest has called it my sacrifice as well as his. Am I allowed to have no view at all about how the table for this meal is set, no ideas about this sacrifice I have been invited to offer? The feeling comes strongly that there are liturgical experts for whom lay opinion is entirely irrelevant.

But for the moment our missals tell us these prayers *are* to be said, that last gospel *is* to be read, so I would like to give some serious reasons for the earnest plea I make that they be retained. The *Introit* is a preparation for the particular prayers of the day—for the Proper—striking the note for a feast of Christ, our Lady, an apostle, a martyr. But the prayers at the foot of the altar are not just a preparation for *this*

mass—they are a magnificent preparation for the act of sacrifice itself. We come before God to offer Christ's redeeming sacrifice as sinners. There is high drama in that double confession of the priest and the people.

The priest with whom I was arguing suggested that if these prayers meant so much to me I could say them in my bedroom—and this was strangely to miss the point. The heckler at a Catholic Evidence Guild meeting often says 'I would confess to a priest if he would confess to me'. Of course one tells him that every priest confesses sacramentally to another priest—but here in the *Confiteor* the priest confesses himself a sinner not to God alone, not even to God's representative alone, but to the whole court of heaven and to his brethren on earth. Even the pope saying mass makes this confession—and we do not deny his sin but beg God to have mercy on him. And then we too confess—telling the priest eagerly that we are just as bad, striking our breasts as we acknowledge our unworthiness to offer the sacrifice, begging him, too, to pray for us. 'May God have mercy upon you' says the priest in his turn, adding a further prayer of absolution which, though not a sacrament, is certainly a sacramental, wiping from our souls the dust of daily, perhaps unremembered, sins; restoring the cleanness we desire for this great hour.

Could I get all this in my bedroom? As a small schoolboy learning to serve mass, my son told me how tremendously this act, these words, impressed him. Towards the end of a long lifetime, at last allowed to utter them in unison with my fellow worshippers, I find them no less moving.

And the last gospel? True the mass is ended, we have been blessed and told we can go. But here is an epilogue which tells us why this mass has become our central worship of our creator. Christianity has been defined as the union of man with God in Christ—and here in St John's words we are reminded of the when and the how: 'The word was made flesh and dwelt amongst us—and we saw his glory'.

What better words than these can sound in our ears as we leave the place of our sacrifice to take the message of salvation into the world? Are we to lose this magnificent preparation for our mass, this concluding meditation on who it is who is there, truly offering, and what it means to us to be united in him to the Father, just because this preparation and this meditation were not in the mass before the tenth century? For this is what, stripped of all verbiage, a lot of what is urged amounts to. Researches into the past are of great value, liturgies may

become overburdened with irrelevant detail, but in these two elements we can see at a glance the most vital relevance. And, imitating the method by which it can be suggested that one preparation may lead to another *ad infinitum*, one might suggest that the danger is far more real that one excision leading to another may result in nothing remaining except the Offertory, Consecration and Communion.

There is enormous gain for our understanding of the mass from the research that has given us a greater understanding of the setting in which the first mass took place; the Jewish roots of our religion help immensely in our understanding of the great tree that has grown from them. And, side by side with liturgical study, scripture and theology may lead us into a constantly deepening understanding of why it is supremely the mass that matters. But although we are learning much that we did not know, we are not, as sometimes seems suggested, learning everything about mass for the first time. And some of the things we are told now need more explanation than is usually given that we may either fit them into the pattern we already have—or, reluctantly perhaps remake our pattern.

I am afraid this article may appear too autobiographical, but I have been asked to write from a standpoint at once lay and personal, and I find it hard to do so except by tracing a development in my own thoughts and feelings which I know is similar to that of many others. As a child preparing for first communion I was shown a chart depicting how the mass, like the sun, circled the world so that at no hour of the day or night was our globe without its mass at some place where the human race is found. Thrilled by this discovery, I felt I could share in its meaning even when I could not be physically present at the altar. For a time, after daily communion came in, I did certainly fall into an exaggeration of the period, and almost felt that week-day mass was not worthwhile if I had broken my fast and could not receive. But the recollection of my mother's early teaching set this right. For she had taught us to know the mass prayers profoundly, adding the practice, if we were ill on a Sunday, of saying our 'mass prayers'—not merely reading the Proper of the Sunday but following the whole mass through as though present at it.

Many years later I read Caryl Houselander's conversation with a priest who refused to listen to uncharitable speech because he and she were at mass—we should, he said, constantly remember that the mass is going on always. And as I learnt the meaning of the prayers in which we say that we are recalling Christ's passion and death, his glorious

Resurrection and triumphant Ascension, I realised more and more fully that every mass finds us not only in the upper room of the last supper, but on Calvary, in the garden of the Resurrection, and on the mount of the Ascension. Meditating on the description in the Apocalypse of the Lamb 'standing as it were slain', I realised too that in another aspect, what is happening is that the eternal worship of heaven is, on our altars, breaking through to earth.

As my understanding deepened, my devotion to the mass increased continuously. It is surely strange that whereas we can weary to satiety of even the most beautiful words, and the most noble music, if reiterated unceasingly, we are never tired of the words which are the vehicle of this supreme worship. I am no hand at contemplative prayer; a meditation means endless distractions or merely plain spiritual reading. But I can hear mass daily, and indeed a second or third mass in the day—I certainly would not say without distraction, but with such a realization of the sacred as no other prayer affords. And although mass is best heard in common with other worshippers I can, if alone with the priest, still realise around me the presence of God's Church on earth, of those who need help against sin, restoration from past sin and its temptation to despair, and consolation in sorrow. And then there are the souls in purgatory whose cleansing we can aid by our prayers, and supremely by *this* prayer. 'When I say a solitary mass with just one server', Father Bevan once said to me, 'I am conscious of the presence of multitudes'.

There seems today a school of thought which repudiates this view of the mass—which holds that, as a French priest put it to me 'Masses must not be multiplied'. If he merely meant not several masses at the same moment in the same church, I saw his point. I have often been sorry when three masses were said at the same time in a small church with altars almost touching, and there was no opportunity for a later one. But I don't think that is what he did mean, for he himself went to communion that day instead of saying his own mass. If I understood it rightly the idea behind this is: first, that mass is primarily the communal meal of the Christian people; and secondly that what I have called the breaking-through into earth of heaven's worship means only that this worship becomes present to the actual congregation. It can, therefore, only become present if there is a group of people for it to become present to. But surely this is to narrow the scope of the sacrifice, which is indeed one with Calvary, but the function of which is to apply here and now what Christ won for us on the cross. The souls in purgatory,

the absent and invisible on the earth, may all be present, may all be making theirs the fruit of this sacrifice in which our Lord is 'always living to make intercession for us', in which he is himself the priest. I do not know if I am right in such a feeling. I cannot emphasize too strongly my realization of two things—my own ignorance and the splendour of that new vitality in the Church which is bound to bring with it feverish argument as well as growth in understanding.

'Faith seeks understanding' and the eager questing of today is a sign that Catholics are no longer, as Newman complained in the nineteenth century, living on the intellect of a former age. But the process of re-awakening, re-focussing the mind is a difficult and perhaps a dangerous one. With our eyes unaccustomed to the light, the immense flood of information, historical, scriptural, theological, may dazzle our mental vision. And I have read enough history to know that if one side of a doctrine has been under-emphasized, the reassertion of the forgotten element may lead to unbalance in the opposite direction. From this we shall be saved, not by the archaeologist or the faddist, but by those men who, like Fr Davis, remind us both of the pastoral side of liturgical development and its growth, not as something isolated but as part of the Church's many-sided development.

The Person and the Place—III: Daniel of Chernigov¹

GEOFFFEY WEBB

For Daniel, a pilgrim from Kiev, the journey to Jerusalem began with a cruise among the islands that was in itself full of interest. At Petala, for instance, there were the asphalt deposits on the water that were piously believed to be an oil distilled from the bodies of drowned martyrs. Gallipoli, Abydos, Crete, and Tenedos in sight of Troy, all had something to offer. On Mytilene there was a shrine to St George, and on Chios another to St Isidore. Ephesus was full of recollections of St John and the seven sleepers, and at Cyprus of the twenty bishoprics, the pilgrims climbed the mountain where Helena had had a shrine built

¹Previous articles appeared in the March and June, 1961, numbers.

for the holy cross. Daniel makes no mention of the time the journey took, such a question having no importance for him whatsoever. But he does keep a note of the distances he covers. By the time they reached Jaffa, for instance, they had covered a distance of sixteen hundred *versts* from Constantinople.

Daniel is always the conscientious statistician (on every point bar only the unimportant one of time), because he is writing a chronicle for the benefit of others who will never get such a chance as his. They will use his account, and benefit from it, as from something holy, therefore they must be thoroughly informed. Daniel's is a privileged mission on behalf of all the Christians of Russia, particularly the princes and boyars, besides being the fulfilling experience of his own life. Jerusalem is clearly the centre of his world.

It was a bishop of Jerusalem, St Cyril, who spoke to his catechumens about our Lord stretching out his hands on the cross so that he might gather and embrace all the ends of the earth. And this, Cyril explained, was not his own idea. The prophet Daniel spoke of God as king before all time, achieving salvation in the midst of the earth. Now, in a domed building that covered the spot known as the earth's navel, the pilgrims were shown the mosaic of Christ inscribed with the words: 'The sole of my foot measures the sky, and the palm of my hand the earth'. The Church of the Resurrection stood nearby, and it was but a step from there to Golgotha, where they saw the round excavation, about a foot wide and a foot deep, where the cross had stood. Under this spot, it was believed, lay Adam's head, and when the rocks opened at the crucifixion, the blood and water from the wounds of Christ had run down to wash that head that belonged to the head of all mankind. So besides venerating Golgotha, they must pay a visit to the chapel beneath, called Calvary, the shrine of Adam's head.

The earth's navel, Golgotha-Calvary, and above all the Church of the Resurrection, were the grouped witnesses to salvation in the midst of the earth. In the great round church, where in Daniel's day twelve monolithic columns symbolized the twelve apostles, the altar piece depicted the raising of Adam from the grave, and was surmounted by a mosaic of Christ ascending. The roof was open to the sky, and beneath this open vault was the Sepulchre, a small cave in the rock, 'so small that you can only get in on your knees'. The pilgrims went in to venerate the sacred stone, which could still be touched in three places left uncovered by the marble overlay. Five great lamps always burned there, the smoke of which escaped through a lantern of Frankish work,

with three latticed windows. Before the sepulchre one could see the stone where the angel sat, when he asked the three Marys why they sought the living among the dead.

Daniel makes it clear from the beginning of his chronicle that his pilgrimage is not only to the centre of the world; it is also a journey to the very centre of time. The altar where Abraham prepared to sacrifice his son had stood nearby the place where Christ was crucified. Here it was that Helena found the cross in after years, together with the crown, the nails, the sponge and the lance. And since this was the place where she had her church built, it must have been through this door that Mary of Egypt tried to come when she wished to kiss the true cross, but the Holy Spirit would not let her in until she had done penance at the image of our Lady, after which she left to lead the rest of her life in the holiness of the Jordan desert. Here too was the *Spoudia* of our Lady, the place of her hastening, where she ran to her son and asked him, in the words of the Good Friday triodion, 'where are you going my son, my child? Is there another wedding feast at Cana . . . ?' For Daniel, much moved at this 'still point of the turning world', all time disappears into eternity, and sequence no longer signifies. Here the mysteries are contemplated in their perpetual actuality, the moment of Abraham and the moment of Mary the Egyptian made one in the eternal moment of redemption. The just men of the Old Testament and the saints of the early church all come together and are found in the same place, at the same time quite outside of time.

This Jerusalem is so much, so completely the figure of the one above, that it is no wonder to Daniel that he finds the city roughly cruciform in shape, and that, even though it is waterless, it has the most abundant harvests. One measure will yield thirty and fiftyfold, so that there can be no doubt that God's blessing is on the place. With this Russian pilgrim we are far from the anti-Semitic disapproval of St Louis. Here, everywhere he goes, Daniel is overcome by wonder and love. His itinerary is strewn with convents and hermitages. He observes how even the dead are preserved in the balsamic air of the valley of Josaphat. And all the time, at every turn, the Old Testament and the New confront him simultaneously. The old Holy of Holies, the place of Jacob's ladder, Solomon's house, the tower of David (with Uriah's house just over the way, as one would expect), the place where Judas lived (still so cursed that no one dare live there), Jeremiah's ditch, the home of Joachim and Anna, now a great church, Solomon's portico, Probatika . . . Daniel misses nothing.

We find him at the feast of Epiphany on the Jordan, recalling how the ford into Arabia, where he stands, is the place where the ark rested when the Israelites passed over. Then came Eliseus, crossing dryshod thanks to Elias' mantle, then our Lord, who was so welcomed by the baptismal river that it rushed up to meet him, while the sea of Sodom shrank back four *versts* from sheer terror. *Quid est tibi mare quod fugisti, et tu Jordanis quia conversus es retrorsum?* Finally, Daniel's favourite, St Mary of Egypt, now on the last stage of her journey, crosses the ford to receive communion from St Zosima, returning this same way to die in the desert. Daniel can see it all, through his own deep familiarity with the bible, the liturgy and the lives of the saints. Remembering, too, that Moses saw the promised land from Phasga, he realizes that it was not, after all, such a very great privation to have no part in its possession. Was it not enough that Moses should see this river, from Phasga, as a place beyond place, in a time outside of time, at which all men justified would find their way to eternity?

Daniel found himself really at home on the banks of the Jordan. By now, feeling perhaps a slight twinge of homesickness, he was comparing the Jordan with the river Snov, back home in Chernigov. 'It has the same look about it, the same width and depth and violence. Trees like the willows of the Ukraine, although they are not really willows, grow alongside it'. There were hard, woody bushes, almost exactly like the *kizil*. There were boars and panthers too, lurking among the rushes, but these did not stop him taking many a pleasant stroll along the banks, feeling comfortably at home.

Finally he had the great joy of seeing heaven's blessing come down on the waters. According to the eastern tradition, our Lord was baptized at midnight. Therefore great throngs of people gathered on the banks by night, singing and holding candles. 'A cross is immersed in the water, and the Holy Spirit comes down in a way that only worthy eyes can see, which means that the pure in heart feel an infinite joy. They sing the hymn that begins "The Lord, receiving baptism in Jordan" . . . and then they all dive in'. He could have added 'Just as we do in Russia'.

Daniel ventured as far afield as he could without risking too much from the Saracens and the lions, and thus was able to identify the oak of Mambre, and the double cave at Hebron where Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were buried. He visited the convent of St Chariton with its relics of the minor prophets, and 'a pretty little chapel dedicated to Habacuc'. Good fortune thereafter provided him with the best possible

escort for a more ambitious journey, as King Baldwin of Jerusalem was making a foray towards Damascus. Daniel would have loved to go as far as Lebanon, 'white capped in the distance, where the white incense comes from', but he and his guide contented themselves with Galilee, where they ate many excellent carp and liked to think of our Lord having often done the same. At Thabor they were received by the Latin monks at the Church of the Transfiguration in so friendly a fashion that Daniel was sufficiently impressed to comment on the welcome given them. Obviously such welcomes, for eastern visitors, were not a matter of routine! The abbot and his monks asked Daniel's blessing, and all wept with great contrition at the hallowed spot. Not only was the apparition of Moses and Elias commemorated in two churches flanking the Transfiguration Church, but there was also a cavern chapel dedicated to Melchisedech who made his offering there of bread and wine, 'which was taken up to heaven'. The guide, on this tour, incidentally, was an old monk of St Sabbas who had lived thirty years in Galilee, 'He showed me the holy places', Daniel adds, 'according to the holy books'. The bible was their Baedeker.

Daniel returned, 'by the grace of God, never having felt once tired, or ill, and without having been attacked'. In fact he felt better in health than ever. 'What can I give in return for such gifts?' he prayed with tears, 'for such sights that I never hoped to see?' But the most wonderful thing of all was yet to come, and with this his chronicle is complete. 'Finally, I, unworthy Daniel, beheld with my own eyes how the holy fire comes down on our Lord's sepulchre at Easter'. This, he says, has often been incorrectly described as the Holy Spirit coming down in the form of a dove, or as lightning striking the lamps. But no—'God's grace comes down invisibly and lights the lamps'. He tells us how, on Good Friday after vespers, all the lights in Jerusalem are put out. Lamps are washed and replenished, and the sepulchre is sealed. At seven in the morning on Good Friday, Daniel went to Baldwin, who was pleasant and approachable, not at all proud ('and, of course, he knew me already') to ask if he might be allowed to put a lamp in the sepulchre on behalf of the people of Russia. The prince kindly had Daniel introduced to the guardian of the keys, and no time was lost in buying the finest lamp in the market, and filling it with the purest oil. That evening, he found the guardian alone in the chapel, took off his sandals and went into the sepulchre, 'placing the lamp with my own sinful hands, at the place where our Lord's feet once lay'. The lamp of the Greeks was already in place at the head of the slab, and the lamp

from the monks of St Sabbas stood at the place where our Lord's breast had been. 'I put down my lamp and bowed to the ground. I kissed the ground and wept. I left with a feeling of deepest joy, and went back to my cell'.

On Saturday morning, between eleven and midday, the people assembled before the Church of the Resurrection. Daniel was included in Baldwin's retinue, and was given a place where he could see directly onto the three sealed doors of the Sepulchre. Vespers were sung in Greek and Latin, the prophecies were read, and finally the canticle *Domino cantabo*. Nothing had happened in the Sepulchre until then, but at that moment Daniel noticed a little cloud that stopped over the open dome. Rain fell on the Sepulchre, and suddenly light blazed out. A bishop, accompanied by four deacons, took Baldwin's candle and lit it from the burning lamps, and the monks lit theirs from Baldwin's and passed the light on. It was different from ordinary fire, burning with a reddish glow. All the people were singing and shouting *Kyrie eleison*, and everyone was mad with joy. It all seemed incredible . . . 'but God and the Holy Sepulchre are my witnesses that all this is true, also my brethren who were with me, from Novgorod and from Kiev, Sedeslav Ivankovitch, Goroslav Mihailovitch, and the two brothers Kashkitcha'.

On Easter Sunday morning, all the monks went to the Sepulchre singing matins, their procession headed by a cross, while the antiphon was intoned . . . 'immortal as Thou art, thou didst deign to enter the tomb'. Daniel can find no words to describe all this Easter joy. Three days after Easter Sunday he went back to the Sepulchre to take his lamp away. He took the opportunity of measuring the Sepulchre, a thing he could not have done if there were people about. The guardian of the keys asked his blessing, and seeing his devotion to the holy place, he lifted up the marble cover and gave Daniel a tiny piece of the Sepulchre stone, begging him not to breathe a word to a soul. Daniel bowed low again, and went out, full of joy, 'rich with the gifts of divine grace', carrying in his hand his very own token of the Holy Sepulchre, the place of Resurrection, 'inestimable treasure that bears holiness in it'.

He says little about his return journey. They went back via the deserted village of Emmaus, then from Lydda they continued to Jaffa. They passed by Carmel, Tyre, and Sidon, Kalimeros, Satalia, Chelidonia, Myra, Patara. Finally, they came once more to Constantinople, and were well on the way to Kiev. 'I wrote', Daniel concludes, 'the

names of the Russian princes in the monastery of St Sabbas—Michael Sviatopolk, Prince Boris, Prince Gleb, and Prince David . . . and all the names of the princes and boyars of Russia I left at the Holy Sepulchre. I said fifty masses for the living, and forty for the dead, in the holy places. All will be blessed who read this, for blessed it is to believe without having seen'. He reminds us how Abraham's faith was blessed with the gift of this very promised land that Daniel now shares with his readers. To believe, he comments, is itself a good work. 'Peace be with you forever'.

The Book of Lamentations¹

BERNARD ROBINSON

The Lamentations of Jeremiah is a book with which the old *Tenebrae* Office for Holy Week gave many people at least a nodding acquaintance. Not infrequently, however, the much admired musical settings tended to detract from the attention given to the words themselves, a fact noticed by Mendelssohn, who remarked that the most powerful music was usually expended on the mere rubrics, the *alephs beths* and *incipits*. That Lamentations does repay, both for theological and for literary content, a careful study, will I hope emerge from this article. But before we speak of content, we should say a word or two about the structure and authorship of the book.

The book consists of five poems, corresponding to its five chapters, of which the first four are abecedarian in structure (which is to say that each stanza begins with a fresh letter of the Hebrew alphabet and each line of the stanza begins with the same letter as the first line), and are written in the usual Hebrew metre for laments and elegies, known as *Qinah*: the characteristics of this metrical form are that the first half of each line contains three 'significant words' or 'substantial ideas', and the second half-line contains only two. The 'limping' effect of this

¹This article is not intended as an original contribution to the study of the book of Lamentations. I am concerned merely to collate and synthesize the discoveries and opinions of reputable scholars about a book which deserves to be known much better than it now is.

metre may perhaps be felt even in translation from the following example:

'Weeping she-wept in-the-night	: her-tears on-her-cheeks.
Never a-comforter had-she	: among-all her-lovers
All-her-friends deceived her	: became her-foes'.

(Lam. I. 2)

(It is desirable to read Lamentations in a version in which a fresh line is used for each line of the Hebrew verse, to retain some flavour of the stark beauty of the original. To me, Knox loses the atmosphere altogether). The last chapter (the *Oratio Jeremiae Prophetae*) is neither abecedarian nor is it written in the *Qinah* metre, but it does (for whatever reason) consist of twenty-two verses, the number of the letters in the Hebrew alphabet. The modern reader will be astonished to find the artificiality of the abecedarian structure so successfully wedded to immense sincerity and spontaneity. As sometimes in Racine, it is as if the emotion achieves its greatest effect precisely as it is felt to be straining to break asunder the restraint of a rigid structure: herein perhaps lies the strength of the 'classical' as against the 'romantic' tradition.

Is the book really by Jeremiah? The most obvious reason for attributing the book to the prophet is the statement in 2 Chron. 35, 25 that after King Josiah died Jeremiah and others uttered dirges over him, and that these dirges were written in the book of the Laments: the phrase in Lam. 4. 20, 'the breath of our nostrils, Yahweh's anointed, was captured . . .' is supposed to refer to Josiah (as the Targum says) and is taken as part of the 'dirges' referred to in Chronicles, so Lamentations is therefore concluded to be the same book as the Laments. But in fact the reference in Lam. 4 cannot be to Josiah, who died twenty years before Jerusalem fell. Stronger ground for the Jeremian authorship may be found in Lam. 3, which has a clear reference to the sufferings of an individual (cf. 3. 1. 'I am the man . . .'), and that this individual is Jeremiah is evident especially from the verses

'They flung me alive into the pit
and threw stones upon me;
Water closed over my head;
I said, I am cut off!' (3. 52-54)

This seems to be a definite allusion to Jeremiah's fate in the pit (Jer. 38. 6 seq.), although the Jeremiah passage actually says: 'There was no water in the cistern, only mire'. But though this part of Lamentations is written in the person of Jeremiah, it remains very doubtful whether the book was actually written by Jeremiah: in Lam. 4. 17, 20 we find

regret expressed at the failure of confidence in Egypt and the Jewish king—but Jeremiah had certainly never reposed any hope in either of these; further, in the Hebrew Bible (unlike the Septuagint and Vulgate), *Lamentations* does not follow Jeremiah.

The abecedarian structure, which Knox stiltedly imitates in his translation, is found elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible, but nowhere, except in Psalm 119, as extensively as here. What motives can lie behind its use? Gottwald² has enumerated the various suggestions that have been put forward. The most decisive reason for the use of the technique is probably the desire for completeness of expression. The Babylonians regarded the alphabet as representing the full cosmic cycle, and we know that the Jews spoke of fulfilling, or breaking, 'the whole law from Aleph to Tau', that is 'completely'. Our author, wishing to express his grief over the desolation of Jerusalem 'from A to Z', as we might say, did precisely and literally that; not that he invented the abecedarian device (there is an instance of it in an inscription of Assurbanipal, decades before *Lamentations*), but it was he who first used it on any considerable scale among the Jews.

Lamentations was composed not long after the most traumatic experience of Israel's history. In 586 B.C., the Chaldean army had captured Jerusalem, had razed the temple to the ground and had carried off into exile in Babylonia all save the poorest and least-educated of Jerusalem's inhabitants. *Lamentations* unfolds the emotions, alternating between near-despair, mystification and trust in Yahweh, excited in eye-witnesses of that fearful event, and reveals them with a vividness that makes for literature of the very first order. Theologically, not the least interesting (and easily the most important) aspect of the book lies in its attitude to suffering. I shall consider at some length Jewish answers to the problem of suffering, and the specific answers provided by this book.

The oldest Jewish view of suffering is neatly illustrated by the words of the psalmist:

'I have been young, and now am old;
yet I have not seen the righteous man forsaken,
nor his children begging bread . . .

The righteous shall be preserved for ever
but the children of the wicked shall be cut off'.

(Ps. 37)

²*Studies in the Book of Lamentations* by Norman K. Gottwald, S.C.M. Press, London, 1954. This excellent book includes a new translation of *Lamentations*, which is marred only by the unlovely verb 'to envision'.

According to this view, prosperity is the reward of virtue, oppression of sin; this unsubtle equation won adherence without any refinement for several centuries. But as the Jews became more settled in the agricultural life, and as 'capitalists' began to multiply, experience began to show that as it stood the doctrine was often proved false. Ecclesiastes ('all toil and all skill in work come from a man's envy of his neighbour' 4. 4) knew the falsity of the doctrine, and the book of Job was written specifically to give the lie to it. Job itself has two explanations of suffering to offer: the prose story of Job (chapters 1, 2 and 42) explains Job's sufferings as a test of his worth imposed by 'The Satan' (who is here perhaps less a devil than a devil's advocate in the trial of Job's worthiness). The explanation offered by the verse story of Job (3-42, 6) is that God's purposes are too mysterious for us to begin to understand the reason for suffering; this much can be learned, from God's effects, that if God does not here and now vindicate the righteous it is not for want of power or of wisdom.

Ecclesiasticus (c. 180 B.C.) teaches the purifying value of suffering: 'Accept whatever comes to you, patient in disease and affliction; gold is tried in the fire and acceptable men in the furnace of affliction' (Ecclus. 2. 4-5): he also says: 'It is easy for Yahweh at the end to requite a man according to his deeds' (11. 26), by which he probably means 'a wicked man may . . . enjoy prosperity all his life, but so terrible may God cause his last hours to be that all his former enjoyment of life becomes wholly obliterated'³. The Book of Wisdom combines the idea of testing with that of the vindication of the just beyond the grave: 'The souls of the righteous are in God's hand: no torment shall touch them. To the foolish they seemed to die, and their departure was taken as their hurt, their going forth as ruin. But they are in peace . . . their brief chastenings over, they will now receive great reward, for God tried them and found them worthy of himself. As gold in the furnace he tried them' (Wisdom 3. 1-6).

The texts quoted show the growth of a reluctance in any particular case to offer an explanation of sufferings; we may compare the dictum of a later Rabbi (Jannai): 'It is not in our power to explain either the prosperity of the wicked or the chastenings of the righteous' (Aboth 4. 19). The old doctrine that sin brings suffering, and virtue prosperity, requires the addition of a rider: the allocation of reward may in fact take place only after death. Thus the growing concern with the after-

³Box and Oesterley in Charles' *Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of O.T.*, Oxford 1913, p. 310. Others think Ecclesiasticus is referring to punishment after death.

life made possible a refinement of the doctrine which fitted the facts of experience.

But we must note that in its application to nations, as distinct from individuals, the doctrine was retained to the end in its original form, and therefore (to return to our subject) Lamentations, which is concerned only with the suffering of a nation, retains the pristine form of the teaching. We are left in no doubt that Jerusalem's fall was due solely to national sin:

'They stagger blindly in the streets
defiled with blood;

None can touch
their clothes.

"Away! Unclean!" men shout at them;

"Away! Touch not!"

Surely they have become fugitives and wanderers:

among the nations they shall dwell no more'. (4. 14-15)

Here there is an oblique comparison with Cain, who also became a 'fugitive and wanderer' (Gen. 4. 12):

'The iniquity of the daughter of my people was greater
than Sodom's sin,

Which was overthrown on a sudden
no hands alighting on her' (4. 6)

The long drawn-out agony of Jerusalem's capture, as contrasted with the painless destruction of Sodom, is taken to show that Jerusalem was more wicked even than Sodom, that very archetype of guilt. Seldom in the Old Testament is God's people painted so black.

Sure as he is that Jerusalem's sufferings are fully deserved, our author's attitude towards them advances an important step beyond the old notion of suffering, for like Ecclesiasticus later he sees that suffering, patiently borne, can itself be the source of merit:

'Good is Yahweh to those who wait for him: to the soul that seeks him.

Good it is to wait quietly: for Yahweh's saving power.

Good it is that a man bear: the yoke from his youth.

Let him sit alone in silence: when he takes it on him;

Let him put his mouth in the dust: perhaps yet there is hope;

Let him give his cheek to the smiter: and be filled with insults.

For the Lord will not cast off for ever'. (3. 25-31)

Under the figure of the yoke, Lamentations is saying much the same thing as Wisdom and Ecclesiasticus will say under the figure of the

furnace. The exciting thing is that so constructive an attitude to suffering should be found at so early a date: for Lamentations predates Ecclesiasticus by nearly three centuries, and was not written in comparatively peaceful times but in the very trough of Israel's most violent disaster. We should notice, however, that these are not in fact the most prevalent sentiments of Lamentations, and the very same poem (i.e. chap. 3) includes quite a measure of acrimonious feeling against Jerusalem's enemies.

Lamentations believes suffering to be good for the soul, but also has a lively hope that the term of the sufferings will soon be reached, a hope which rests upon a deep sense of the justice of God:

'Yahweh will not
cast off for ever.
Though he inflict pain
he will have pity in abundance of mercy;
For not with pleasure does he oppress
and afflict men'. (3. 31).

'To crush under foot
all prisoners of earth,
To turn aside a man's right
before the Highest,
To subvert a man in his cause
—Yahweh does not approve'. (3. 34-6)

But despite this vigorous confidence in Yahweh's justice, and despite the surprisingly advanced attitude to suffering that we have noted, the prevailing mood of Lamentations is one of deep heart-rending sorrow over Jerusalem's ruin, expressed with a rare poignancy to which even the psalm *Super Flumina* scarcely aspires:

'Is it nothing to you all, you who pass by?
Consider and see
If there be any sorrow like to my sorrow
which was dealt me,
Which Yahweh inflicted
in the day of his fierce wrath'. (1. 12)

'Happier the victims of the sword
than famine's victims;
For they pine away, debarred
from produce of the fields;

Even compassionate women
 Boiled their children;
 They became their food
 at the destruction of the daughter of my people.' (4.
 9 and 10)

Surely no better part of scripture could be chosen to express the desolation of Holy Week than this exquisite composition. It is fascinating, in fact, to discover that the connection of Lamentations with Holy Week may actually be much closer than has ever been suspected, for Gottwald (op. cit.) has shown good reason to suppose that the second part of Isaiah, with which Lamentations has not a few similarities, may in fact have been written *after* Lamentations, and not before as is usually supposed: thus the passages about the Suffering Servant, in which Christ is prefigured, may be modelled on the description of Jeremiah's afflictions in the third chapter of Lamentations.

Since early times Lamentations has been read by Jews on the Fast of the Ninth of Ab, when the destruction of the Temple is commemorated. Schaff, in his *Through Bible Lands*⁴ has a moving reference to the Jewish use of Lamentations. He is speaking about the 'Wailing Place of the Jews at Jerusalem': 'There the Jews assemble every Friday afternoon and on festivals to bewail the downfall of the holy city. I saw on Good Friday a large number, old and young, male and female, venerable rabbis with patriarchal beards and young men kissing the stone wall and watering it with their tears. They repeat from their well-worn Hebrew Bibles and Prayer-Books the Lamentations of Jeremiah and suitable Psalms . . the key note of all these laments and prayers was struck . . in the Lamentations, that funeral dirge of Jerusalem and the theocracy. This elegy, written with sighs and tears, has done its work most effectually in great public calamities, and is doing it every year on the ninth of the month Ab (July), when it is read with loud weeping in all the synagogues of the Jews and especially at Jerusalem. It keeps alive the memory of their deepest humiliation and guilt and the hope of final deliverance. The scene of the Wailing Place was to me touching and pregnant with meaning'.

⁴pp. 250-252. Quoted in A. W. Streane's edition of *Jeremiah and Lamentations* in the Cambridge Bible series, p. 360.

Retreat and Action

S. G. A. LUFF

If so many modern forms of apostolate require their members to make an annual retreat, or even a monthly day of recollection, I am inclined to think it is far less a case of their organizers including something from the familiar Catholic stock-in-trade than one of needing to satisfy a real want. It really is an impressive feature of the twentieth-century apostolate and goes a long way to prove its authenticity. As long as apostles—actionists—realize they have nothing to give without first finding it in prayer and seclusion we can trust their work to be truly under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

The first rousers of conscience among the Catholics of France and Belgium were the Abbé Cardijn and later the Abbé Godin, creating the Young Christian Workers to redeem an entire class; not a remote dusky jungle-dwelling race, but a nation of neighbours, living in the closed world of factories and workshops, who had become alienated from the Church. Doubtless in the English-speaking world if we hear of someone going off to a retreat house we are impressed—he must be making headway in spirituality. The Jocists in France however are not exacting. They are willing to use the half-converted to win the unconverted. 'Gérard', for instance, spent a whole year in the YCW as an apparently indifferent onlooker and only a half-practising Catholic. Yet after his first retreat he wrote this: 'Before, my prayers were mere routine, just out of habit. But not now—now I talk with Christ about my pals. I ask him to bring them into the YCW along with us. When I go to communion, I think about them. I ask our Lord to make me stronger, to overcome my shyness so that I can approach them'. If results like this occur with the lapsed Catholics who attend such retreats (it was not a retreat for lapsed Catholics) there may be something to learn from this broad policy.

Young Christian Workers who grew up and out of the youth movement found that the warm spirituality and apostolate of their teens left an ache. Besides joining forms of adult Catholic Action, they needed movements that would give them spiritual direction and fraternity that would use up a matured enthusiasm. From this evolved numerous family groups, notably the *Foyers Notre-Dame*, today numbering thousands, with a spirituality based on their married state, on the blessings

and trials of living together. Its elements are family prayer, mutual discussion of problems with prayer in the presence of God, a careful study of their faith, especially in relation to marriage, and hospitality towards other members of the group (usually about eight families). In the *Notre-Dame* groups couples are expected to make their retreat together. Perhaps some are hard put to find a retreat house where this is possible, though retreat organizers are waking up to the need. If husband and wife each attempt a deep spiritual life under quite different direction it seems a lost opportunity. Couples especially who find their love through working together in the apostolate should not find it hard to pool the deepest interests of all.

The more intense pastoral zeal becomes, the more it realizes the need to 'come apart' to consider plans and reach decisions. Readers may recall the Abbé Michonneau's book *Revolution in a City Parish*, about the *Sacré Coeur*, Colombes, in the Paris outer suburbs, where the Abbé completely recast the pastoral and liturgical life of a poorer sort of industrial neighbourhood where, in France, practice can fall almost to nothing. Both this church, and the mother church of Colombes, *SS Pierre et Paul*, are in the care of the Sons of Charity. The whole atmosphere is one of deep sincerity, cheerfulness, vitality, hard work. When you enter the presbytery at *SS Pierre et Paul*—the door is open—this notice greets you: 'Come in—you are at home. Share with us the joy and peace of the Lord'. A bright young woman, the permanent parish secretary, is ready to cope with simple enquiries that do not demand a priest. The parish priest has eight curates. On Sundays there are fourteen masses with two confessors in attendance from 6.30 till 12. They claim that the parishioners know 150 to 200 hymns by heart. Recently 12,000 leaflets explaining the coming feast of Christmas were distributed round the parish, mostly by hand.

These are clues to the energetic pastorate that re-vitalizes the sort of parish that used to be forsaken. Is there spiritual force behind the effort? Annually the whole priestly team disappears into the countryside. They relax. Every evening, for a week, prayerfully, they plan the year ahead. At home on the parish they spend three quarters of an hour daily in mental prayer together. An echo of this spirit in the parish is that out of ninety state-school teachers—a notoriously anti-religious body in France—a third make an annual two-day retreat.

The General Mission, that is to say the apostolate of a complete locality, perhaps several towns, by a specially trained team of priests and layfolk in close collaboration with local clergy and all the units of

Catholic Action, may take years. Preparation is prolonged, and profound. When the priestly committees meet, they spend the day conferring between the hours of the Office recited in common. They go into retreat before opening the weeks of full missionary activity. So do the lay helpers. I know a Secular Institute devoted to the rescue of prostitutes; although its members are bound daily to mass and mental prayer they retire to a convent for a whole day of recollection once a month, in addition to their annual retreat. No matter how up-to-date any form of apostolate may be, no matter how intense its action, the feature they all have in common is this insistence on return to prayer and study of the gospels as their well of strength.

A recent Italian TV film has introduced the Little Brothers (and Sisters) of Jesus to their biggest public. They were seen in the desert, contemplating on mountains, yet their life as religious is usually lived in slums and back streets. Their Prior-General, Père Voillaume, wrote 'we have definitely taken wage-earning as the outward form of our religious life'. Cycling home from the factory they are outwardly indistinguishable from anyone else, except for a small badge. Meet them later in the 'fraternity' and you may find them in simple grey habits in the chapel (one I know is a converted coal hole, yet its furnishings are in the finest taste) saying vespers in French slowly and with great reverence, or adoring before the blessed sacrament. They seem to be the most ancient and yet the most modern order, perfectly natural at the worker's bench or down the mine, but with their hearts in the desert of their novitiate. Once a month the brother leaves his 'fraternity' for a monastery or friendly home for a day of seclusion, or you may find him bound for a period of retreat in the desert, or on an island off the Breton coast. They are a demonstration that the tougher your life the less your justification to give up retreats—you need them more. One brother wrote: 'In the midst of all this agitation, noise, and bustle, I look forward to when I am alone in the cabin of my lorry, my little cell where I rediscover the mountain calm, the desert silence'.

This brings us to the idea of a retreat—what is the great appeal? Many of us live busy, highly organised lives, full of rush hours. We expect a retreat house to offer us a similar degree of organization, or we might be put at a loss. So the organized retreat is a necessity. It can lead to mistakes—the notion that retreats consist of a succession of exercises and activities ('do we make the stations of the cross next?'), or that it is all a matter of taking in the retreat master's personality. We need a sense of proportion. We set out to 'come apart awhile' with our Lord,

to go up with him into a high place. It is his chance to transfigure himself and disclose his glory, so that like his apostles we should want to stay there with him. If we stay in a monastery guest house we may get no conferences, but the retreat can be just as valid if we take the opportunity to pray and read and reflect. No one will stop our drawing up a simple timetable or asking for counsel which will hardly be refused. The kind of retreat that best suits us we discover by forethought, advice, or trial.

The least satisfactory result will be a sigh of relief and a sort of doggy shaking down with the thought, 'Now that's over for a year'. If the retreat renews our spirit it should tend to make habits of what we previously tried with an effort. The good work of a retreat can be continued in our normal life by an occasional day of quiet and prayer which even husband and wife can easily share at home. By way of suggestion—assist at a high mass with sermon, in the afternoon make perhaps a short pilgrimage, attend an evening service, conclude with carefully selected night prayers. Above all keep the atmosphere of the home orderly and quiet, even if it means persuading the children to go on an outing. And bear in mind that these retreats into the presence of God are sources of future vitality and action in the cause of spreading his kingdom.

Reviews

THE IDEA OF PUNISHMENT, by Lord Longford; Geoffrey Chapman, 10s. 6d.

- Socrates: Is it ever right for a just man to harm anybody?
 Polemarchus: Of course: he should harm the wicked and those who are his enemies.
 Socrates: When horses are harmed, do they become better or worse?
 Polemarchus: Worse.
 Socrates: They lose, that is to say, part of what makes a horse a good horse?
 Polemarchus: That's right.
 Socrates: Must we not say, then, that when men are harmed they lose part of what makes a man a good man?
 Polemarchus: Yes.

- Socrates: Is not justice what makes a man a good man?
 Polemarchus: Certainly.
 Socrates: So men, when they are harmed, must become more unjust?
 Polemarchus: Yes.
 Socrates: Now can a learned man use his learning to make others more unlearned?
 Polemarchus: Of course not.
 Socrates: Can a just man, then, display his justness by making others more unjust? Must we not rather say that it is never right for a just man to harm anyone at all? (*Republic I*, 335b-d, abbreviated).

Throughout most of his book, Lord Longford is on the side of Socrates. He tells us that he feels pride and joy 'that our modern ideas of punishment are conceived far more deliberately in the interests of the delinquent than those of earlier times'. He is rightly anxious that the element of reform of the criminal should play a part in our penal practice; and he very justly points out that it is an odd way to reform a man to place him for *n* years in demoralising conditions, enforced idleness and bad company. He realises that if our present penal system is to be justified at all, it must be on grounds of deterrence or retribution, or both; and he does much to clarify the concepts here involved. With Socratic patience he draws the necessary and often neglected distinctions between crime and sin, between individual deterrence and general deterrence, between the purpose of the prison system and the purpose of the penal system as a whole; and he dispels the popular illusion that a deterrent theory of punishment leads necessarily to less severe punishments than a retributive theory. With Socratic modesty, he is always ready to learn from other writers, and if he disagrees with an author, it is never without complimenting him first. Indeed, the reader may feel that Lord Longford is too modest, and wish that he had reduced the number of his quotations in order to expound his own views at greater length. This is particularly so with regard to Chapter II, where Lord Longford reduces his role to that of a teller counting votes for and against retribution; votes whose significance is difficult to assess, since no two of the voters seem to have meant the same thing by 'retribution'.

But there are passages where Lord Longford seems to speak with the voice of Polemarchus. He is convinced that retribution is an important element in punishment, and that it has been wrongly neglected in recent treatments of the topic. By 'retribution' he sometimes means the proportioning of the punishment to the crime; but this cannot be all he means, since a purely deterrent theory may include this element no less than a retributive theory. Sometimes, again, he means the payment of compensation by the criminal to his victim; but again, he must mean more than this if his theory is to apply to such punishments as imprisonment, which in no way benefit the victim of a crime. One is forced to the conclusion that sometimes at least he is using the word 'retribution' to refer to some alleged restitution which a criminal makes to his victim or to society *merely by suffering*, no matter whether this suffering is likely to benefit anyone

or not. To demand retribution in this sense is to make the suffering of the criminal an end in itself. And to seek the harm of another as an end in itself is an evil thing; which, I take it, is what Socrates meant.

Lord Longford writes: 'In terms of strict justice it seems to me that the man who has broken the law has placed himself in the debt of society. Society, therefore, has a right to insist on some form of restitution or compensation' (p. 60). But one can pay a debt to someone only by benefiting him in some way; and how does society benefit by the useless suffering of any of its members? I can think of only one way in which it might be thought to do so. Suburban housewives, if we may believe the *New Statesman*, feel an intense desire to have young hooligans thrashed. It might well be thought, therefore, that a juvenile delinquent who is chastised in this manner is performing, perhaps for the first time in his life, a public service: he is keeping the suburban housewives happy. I have heard this argument put forward seriously by a philosopher: but I hardly think it would appeal to Lord Longford any more than it does to me.

But isn't it true that criminals *deserve* to be punished? Yes, if they have broken a law which carries a punishment as its sanction: this is what in this context 'deserving punishment' means. But don't the wicked deserve to suffer, quite apart from any context of law and sanction? No: not in any sense of 'deserve' in which an injustice is done if a man does not get his deserts. If a bad man deserved, in this sense, to suffer, then every time an offence was forgiven, an injustice would be done. A good man deserves to be happy, and a bad man does not deserve to be happy; that is all. But doesn't the good man deserve to be *happier than* the bad man, so that *he* is cheated of *his* deserts if the bad man is happy after all? No: we cannot say that a good man deserves to be happier than a bad man; unless, that is, we accept the philosophy of the Prodigal's elder brother.

Perhaps I have misunderstood Lord Longford's theory of retribution; I trust that I have. But it seems to me sad that a book so obviously full of goodwill and earnest thought should even appear to lend the authority of his name to a theory so mistaken.

Since the book will certainly be reprinted, it may be worth while to point out some misprints: 'McDoughall' (p. 29), 'Teilhard du Chardin' (p. 74), 'Hobbs' (p. 80), 'Bloomesbury' (p. 81), 'Fr Kevin S.J.' (for 'Fr Kelly S.J.', p. 92), 'Routledg' (p. 103), and, quaintest of all, 'Irish Murdoch' (p. 84).

ANTHONY KENNY

PAUL AND HIS PREDECESSORS, by A. M. Hunter; S.C.M. Press, 15s.

The first 115 pages of this book are a reprint of a study which appeared in 1940, reacting against the widespread exaggeration among Protestant biblical scholars of St Paul's role as a doctrinal innovator. It was then argued more frequently than it is now that Paul was the source from which other New Testament writers

derived much of their doctrine; while his own dependence on the traditions of the primitive Church, stemming ultimately from our Lord himself, tended to be overlooked. The 1940 study examines the dependence of Paul on his predecessors, and some detailed attention is given to many apparently pre-Pauline allusions, traditions, hymns and doctrines contained in his letters. A 35-page appendix, 'After twenty years', surveys the original work and brings it up to date in conformity, for the most part, with the views of Jeremias, Cullmann and Dodd. It is interesting to see just how far it has been necessary to amend the author's earlier exegesis, for here is a reflexion of the progress made in biblical studies in the last twenty years. It is unfortunate that each subject for study is divided between the main part of the book and the appendix; however the whole is still valuable as a concise and readable account of some leading biblical criticism. One would like to have seen more appreciation of Paul's immense personal contribution as a creative theologian, especially in regard to the *body*, and the antithesis *flesh-spirit*. By the nature of its thesis, the book leaves a one-sided impression.

It may seem to some that Paul's debt to the traditions he received is too obvious to need thrashing out. Catholics especially are hardly likely to suspect Paul of creating his own doctrine in cases, for example, where it is plainly affirmed in the synoptic Gospels. True as this is, an examination of the elements of tradition, cult and doctrine which Paul inherited illuminates the 'twilight period' of primitive Christianity. 'We can, to some extent, know what the pre-Pauline Christians believed; what *kerygma* they proclaimed; what ethical teaching they gave to converts; what sacraments they celebrated, and the kind of hymns they sang; how they conceived of Jesus their Master, and how they interpreted and used the Old Testament scriptures; how they thought about the Holy Spirit, and what convictions they held about the last things'. (p. 110f).

ROBERT SHARP, O.P.

CHRIST AND US, by Jean Daniélou; Mowbray, 30s.

"The aim of the present work", says the author in his introduction, "is to provide a kind of Summa", a comprehensive survey, from the standpoint of every intellectual discipline, of Christian speculation concerning the Incarnate Word of God'.

That is the first paragraph of the publisher's 'blurb', and constitutes a fairly accurate picture of the kind of book Père Daniélou has set out to write. It is a work of popularization plus a dash of polemic, a mixture that makes it a very easy book to read. What I am less certain about is whether or not this is a good thing. In a simple, sometimes an over simple, way it introduces many of the themes of modern theology, but it introduces so many of them that they often receive just the sketchiest treatment. On the other hand it may be argued that this is not very important when the author is simply concerned to produce a short

synthesis of the work of historians, exegetes, theologians, philosophers and spiritual writers who have all thought about our Lord. If this kind of popularization can ever be successful, and I simply do not know whether it can or not, then *Christ and Us* is a very fine book.

For those whose knowledge of theology is not great, or for those whose time is short, then this book will be invaluable as a guide to the way in which modern theologians are thinking. The clarity of the translation will make it possible for such readers to see for themselves many of the problems that Père Daniélou mentions only in passing, if at all. It is vital to remember when reading a book of this kind, particularly with so able an author, that they *are* problems. The ease of the writing as well as the simplification could easily delude the reader into thinking that much of what is said is self-evident. But this is far from the case. In order to make one's own the conclusions, often tentative, of theologians like Rahner, Durrwell, Mersch or Cerfaux, it is necessary not only to read considerably, but also to do some hard thinking for oneself. I think it probable that this book could be a valuable starting point for such reading and thinking.

The chapter dealing with philosophy disappointed me most. It is combined with Christology which is dealt with as adequately as anything else in the book. But Fr Daniélou has seen fit to confine his philosophy to a criticism of the work of H. Dumery. It is a very able criticism, but hardly sufficient as an account of the place of philosophy in the study of Christ.

The bibliographies at the end of each chapter could be enlarged with profit, and it is worth noting that many of the titles given in French are now available in English.

NEIL MIDDLETON

THE MYSTERY OF GOD'S LOVE, by Dom Georges Lefebvre; Geoffrey Chapman, 12s. 6d.

Of all subjects for the writer the most notable is love, and the most impossible. This is particularly the case if it is God's love, with all the greater difficulty of a divine mystery over a human. Dom Lefebvre has not avoided every pitfall, not even some unnecessary ones, although he has valuable and effective things to say.

To begin with criticism; although his plan is unexceptionable—God's gift of love, the conditions of our response, the resultant union, its consequences—its shape is not well impressed on us and the book, both in the long and the short run, lacks both structure and development. Paragraphs multiply themselves without evident interconnection. Sentences, often needlessly involved, go their separate ways. Yet they are usually both true and sensible and also often illuminating. Proof reader and translator have admitted further blemishes, errors of spelling and an occasional clumsy period, but it was the original publishers, *Les Editions du Cerf*, who should have made their author discipline himself better.

For the earlier part of the book makes really awkward reading. It flows ill, nor is there relief for us from illustration, anecdote or personality. Fortunately the atmosphere lightens in the second half and the writing is much more consecutive. Only further blocks of quotation from St John of the Cross and St Teresa remain to stub the mind as it presses on. Apart from these the Bible is the only authority cited, but unfortunately with its concreteness and imagery siphoned off. Abstraction prevails, the greatest defect of the work.

Yet one finishes and puts it down with real gain. It is honest, inspired, intolerant of pusillanimity, undistracted from its divine goal. The very clumsiness of delivery gives earnest of prophetic summons, Amos in the fields, the beloved disciple stumbling out his Apocalypse, John Vianney pleading from his rural pulpit.

There are sharp enunciations of truth: love is frustrate unless Trinitarian; in Christ the Father himself loves us; our life exists that our desire for God may grow; to have trust is to let God make our plans; renunciation is not cutting off, but looking in a new way at our surroundings; a soul possessed by grace is a source of grace to souls; to respond to grace helps to redeem the world; we must beware of turning our brethren down as the Pharisees did Christ; if we are finding joy in God we shall delight in making others happy; and so on.

And there are wise counsels about perseverance and prayer and renunciation and regard for others and many other aspects of the Christian life. Some of this material is evidently the fruit of experience. But sometimes one wonders whether the experience should be generalized. Perhaps no 'spiritual' writer wholly avoids this mistake, though it would seem to be a great one. May not God perhaps treat with each of us uniquely? After all he created each of us a unique personality. Too many people tell us what should be going on between each of us and his creator. But it would be wrong to end with this complaint. On the subject of God's love Dom Lefebvre is both helpful and energizing.

P. D. HOLDSWORTH, O.S.B.

THE WISDOM OF THE DESERT, extracts from the *Verba Seniorum*, introduced and translated by Thomas Merton; Hollis and Carter, 16s.

We are *initiated* into the Christian life and not simply taught *about* it, any formulation always pre-supposing the Christian experience itself. The call we are hearing to make a return to sources is to enable us to discover our way back to God by seeing what is essential in our faith and what is more or less external, and this because so often we seem to have the style while the vigour and meaning have been lost. Nor is this re-resourcefulness only scriptural—though it must always be principally this—but a return to the *Via Regia*, the whole Western ascetical tradition from Cassian to Charles de Foucauld. Professor Chadwick, in the introduction to his translation of parts of the *Verba*, Cassian's *Conferences* and St Benedict's *Rule*, which comprises his volume 'Western Asceticism', justifies—

what may at first sight seem surprising—the amount of space he gives to the Egyptian Fathers, by showing that they were one of the most important influences on the *Rule* and consequently on Western Christianity; ‘It is one of the most significant and rewarding of all sources since it contains so much of the “raw material” of history.’ What are the *Verba*? From the middle of the fifth century, and probably from the late fourth, collections of the sayings of the hermits began to be gathered together, St Anthony, St Pachomius and Abbot Moses ‘that great gentle negro’ among them. The question is asked, how am I to find God? and in return the seeker receives a ‘word’, goes to his cell, meditates, puts it into practice, takes it to Church with him and exchanges sayings with his brother hermits, and in this way the sayings grew. Nor are they all moralizing and *diablerie*, but show a quite special wisdom not to be acquired by merely human knowledge. As a monk of the twentieth century Fr Merton has availed himself of the privilege enjoyed by monks of earlier days in making this selection, freely translated, so that ‘those who need and enjoy such apothegms may be encouraged, by the taste of clear water, to follow the brook to its source’. A long and forceful introduction points out that the Fathers have much to teach us, having preoccupations and living in a situation not at all unlike our own. He speaks of their uncompromising personal decision to follow ‘an uncharted way’ in a ‘life continued in compunction’, ‘shaped by solitude’, for ‘our time is in desperate need of this kind of simplicity (and) the word to emphasize is *experience*’. These men spent a good deal of their time simply awaiting the re-appearance of the risen Lord, and the *Verba* only make sense in this light, whereas our own eschatological sense has been dulled; yet it is only if we really believe that he will come again and learn to be expectant that we can practice their detachment and find purity of heart. It is a pity, therefore, that such a price for so small a book (81 pp.) will prevent many people buying it, especially when a book of the value of Professor Chadwick’s is available for only 35s.

ALEXANDER NEWMAN, O.P.

THE MYSTICAL LIFE, by J. H. M. Whiteman; Faber and Faber, 30s.

Since God is utterly transcendent of his creatures and the order of pure spirit remote from the embodied spirit of man on earth, human understanding of communion with God and above all its imaginative expression is liable to distortions and illusions. Even when Catholic faith safeguards a mystic from unorthodox doctrines, in other respects the form and fashion of his experience may be defective in the extreme. This has been sufficiently shewn by Fr Thurston’s studies of the by-products of Catholic mysticism. *A fortiori* when, as is Dr Whiteman’s case, the seeker for God has no guide other than his personal experience and his interpretation of other evidence in the light of that experience, it is not surprising that his experience of God should be invested, one must

say adulterated, with a very considerable element of illusion and misinterpretation. Dr Whiteman, I cannot doubt, has over the years sought God with a whole-hearted devotion and in obedience to his will as he conceives it to be. Therefore he convinces us that he is a genuine mystic, has experienced the union with God he has pursued so earnestly. He is moreover a man of quite exceptional erudition well acquainted not only with the writings of the mystics, Christian and non-Christian, but also with a wide yet detailed knowledge of philosophy.

Nevertheless his book contains so much that is fantastic, so much in other respects unacceptable, that its value is solely that of a record, though this in itself is considerable, of strange psychical experiences carefully registered and sincerely credited. The Catholic cannot find in it a contribution to mystical theology or a guide to the life of prayer. At the outset of his book Dr Whiteman defines 'mysticism' as 'the study of anything non-physical'. Later, however, he restricts this unsatisfactory extension of the term and distinguishes between the psychical and the properly mystical. The latter is characterized by two unities, 'an immanent unity' which is the integration of the self and 'a Transcendent Unity which is known through a metaphysical direction of the mind to the One and the Good'. (pp. 53-4.) How much simpler to describe mysticism as experienced union with Good and secondarily whatsoever is connected with that experienced union. In any case it is strange and arbitrary to maintain that St Teresa's 'Passive Recollection and Quiet seems to mark the highest point reached by psychical states and the Prayer of Union the beginning of mystical states'. (p. 56.)

However much the author has pursued, in his central intention, union with God in detachment and obedience, very many, it might even seem the majority, of the experiences related in this book are of what he terms his spiritual body: 'the human form of the spirit'. His explanation of this is none too clear. Is it spirit or matter? In one place it is described as a condensation of universal spiritual flux (p. 204). It would seem to be an energy intermediate between spirit and matter—but in this I may be mistaken—in any case a counterpart of the physical body, experienced however as more, not less, objective and real. Moreover, however spiritual Dr Whiteman may conceive it he evidently experiences it as thoroughly physical, a fleshly body complete with all its parts, organs and many functions. His evidence for its existence is the personal experiences, many of which are here reported, together with others cited from books. Since these experiences are extremely vivid and realistic Dr Whiteman will not regard them as dreams, and is convinced that his consciousness has passed over into the spiritual body. However, not only are experiences which may be products, hallucinations, of the imagination wholly insufficient evidence for this alleged spiritual body: in most cases they present the character of exceptionally vivid dreams. The parallel experience, quoted from the Proceedings of the Society of Psychical Research, of 'Miss C.A.' whose still living father led her from her bed to the site of his future grave is clearly a dream, and her belief that she was awake an illusion. (The prophetic factor is from this point of

view irrelevant.) There is little sustained consistency in Dr Whiteman's experiences. Figures appear and vanish. One object may even change into another—e.g. animals into flowers. 'A dog like a setter' is 'seen' but when the subject 'approached to fondle it, a return to the physical state quickly ensued' (p. 72). Surely the dreamer woke. Moreover, as in the case of Miss C.A., many, I believe most, of the experiences occurred when the subject was in bed, and in my belief had just fallen asleep.

The most fantastic and disconcerting feature of Dr Whiteman's experiences of his spiritual body is their reversal of sex. It is the body of a beautiful young girl—on one occasion a young mother also gives birth to twins—or a mother nursing her baby. The emotions of a woman are vividly felt and described. One might believe the writer a woman. Dr Whiteman sees in this womanhood the expression of the feminine factor in his masculine psychology and of the fact that the human psyche is feminine in relation to God. An expression of these things it may well be, but a subjective creation, a dream fantasy. And although mystics regard the soul as in a sense feminine towards God and some, St John of the Cross, for example, have employed the imaginative symbolism of a woman's love, they do not experience an imaginative change of sex. A compulsive and somewhat unhealthy quality of the author's imagination has pushed him across the frontier of legitimate symbolism into a positive hallucination.

In conclusion, the book is an interesting and valuable record of extraordinary psychical experiences, investing a genuine mystical aspiration and union, but as a contribution to mystical literature of very little if any worth.

E. I. WATKIN

THE PASSION ACCORDING TO JOHN, by J. C. Fenton; S.P.C.K., 7s. 6d.

There are many excellent points to this small book. First, it is an example of *lectio divina* as it should be today, a preparation of scripture, taking every advantage of modern exegesis, but leading the reader beyond mere scholarship into a deeper faith and prayer; it follows a really sound method, presenting the scripture, then a brief clear commentary, which is textual, literary and theological, then some meditations or themes for meditation, though these latter, an attractive modesty in the author, are given in an appendix; thirdly, its setting, which is liturgical, here Anglican. The exegesis is sound except for one or two small points, but one minor and one major criticism must be made. The minor one—which does not affect the commentary—is that it is implied that this Passion is a re-writing of Mark's, and it is never allowed, at least explicitly, that the author may be the beloved disciple himself, drawing on memories more exact than the synoptics' at the same time as he sees a profounder significance in them. The major criticism is that the author is not bold enough; he seems so anxious to avoid any theology of sacrifice that he skimps the significance of the frequent passover references; if, in tracing the setting of the

passion narrative at the climax of the gospel, he had worked out the series of signs and the significance of the Crucifixion/Resurrection as the final sign, he would have been able to write a richer and more catholic commentary on the final paragraphs of the narrative. As it is, he is content with rather bare statements which are in line with traditional theology, but which do not fulfil the promise even of his own method. The result is to leave one feeling that though the text and the literary commentary are excellent, its theology—a protestant theology of conversion and faith—while achieving many fine insights, is partial and one-sided. With these reservations, it is an excellent book, very pleasantly produced and printed for so low a price.

BENET WEATHERHEAD, O.P.

LITURGY AND SPIRITUALITY, by Gabriel Braso, O.S.B., translated by Leonard J. Doyle; The Liturgical Press, Collegeville, \$ 3.50.

Nothing is more important in the life of the Church at the present moment than to re-unite in the minds of the faithful what has been achieved in the fields in which the Church is advancing—scripture and patristic study, liturgical worship and vital pastoral methods. Or rather, to relate these advances to whatever is vital in the carryover from the preceding centuries. The faithful often do not want to surrender to the seeming innovations of the experts, the experts become impatient with the lagging faithful. What is needed is a simple statement or way of working which will preserve but re-orient all that is good from the past with what appears to be vital for the future. Dom Gabriel Braso's book sounds from its title as though it were going to attempt this in one field at least—'spirituality'. For those who would be avant-garde, 'spirituality' is a smear-word, associating with itself the notions of narrowness, secondary devotions, the outworn: rightly understood as a particular way of training the Christian soul to whom it is suited, with perhaps an emphasis on one or other aspect of Christian life and prayer, there is nothing wrong with it, and Dom Gabriel proceeds to show that the liturgy is the best, fullest and broadest spirituality there is, that of the Church herself. It is a pity that the book, despite a good ground plan, is so long-winded, since the author has a sound grasp of the scriptural and theological basis of the liturgy and much of the book is taken up with this. These principles had to be stated, but it is only towards the end, in the last three chapters, that he really gets to grips with the problem, the place of the Christian as an individual—the field of 'spirituality'—in the communal worship—the field of liturgy. He has not, I think, made up his mind whether he is writing a book about the liturgy in itself, or whether he is trying to reconcile the old and the new, and if so for whom. From the *art nouveau* dust-jacket one might think that it was meant for the faithful reader beginning to be interested in the liturgy, from the turgid abstraction of the writing one might

think it was meant for seminarians and upwards. But those who do struggle through it will be able better to re-unite the old and the new in their own minds or the minds of their congregations.

BENET WEATHERHEAD, O.P.

THE RUBRICS OF THE ROMAN BREVIARY AND MISSAL : THE GENERAL DECREE OF 26 JULY, 1960, WITH AN ENGLISH TRANSLATION, by J. B. O'Connell; Burns and Oates, 10s. 6d.

HOW TO USE THE NEW BREVIARY, by Lancelot Sheppard; Darton, Longman & Todd, 5s.

PRAYING THE BREVIARY, by Graham Jenkins; Challoner Publications, 4s. 6d.

HANDBOOK FOR THE NEW RUBRICS, by Frederick R. McManus; Geoffrey Chapman, 21s.

Some of us still become a little confused when some rubrical hazard appears, and we have to apply the new rules which came into force on January 1st, 1961. Burns and Oates have produced for us the complete Latin text of the decree for the Roman Rite, with a page for page translation by Canon O'Connell, one of the most prominent liturgical experts in the country. The first announcements of this book, back in the dark ages of 1960, told us there would be a commentary, but this has been left for a future publication, presumably to see how the new rubrics work in practice. Technical rubrical Latin has its peculiarities of diction, and we probably should not grumble at correspondingly peculiar technical English, such as 'properness' and 're-placement' (of a feast) for *proprietas* and *repositio*, and phrases like 'exequial Mass', 'translated feast' (in n.99, though usually 'transferred') and 'extraordinary celebrations'; maybe 'properness' would need a circumlocution to avoid it, but we might 'shift' a feast, or attend a 'funeral' or a 'special festivity'. It seems a pity that the kindly *Variationes* at the end of the Roman decree, summing up for us what in fact has been altered, have been omitted (except for the calendar), and also the *Declarationes* regarding the application of the new rubrics to local or monastic calendars.

Lancelot Sheppard has given us a useful booklet, 'severely practical . . . [to] make the learning of the breviary easier or the adaptation of an old breviary possible' (p. ix). It is an excellent introduction to use of the breviary in general, and in particular to the management of the new rubrics. The last chapter explains the mysteries of an *Ordo*.

Praying the Breviary starts with nine pages of history of the breviary, so compressed as in fact to be misleading: for instance (p. 6) one has the impression that the *Gloria Patri* was added to the Psalms in the first century, and (p. 11) that the Franciscans adopted the breviary of the Roman Curia, while in fact Haymo of Faversham was invited to organize its text in 1241. A sad gracelessness of style is rather evident: 'clergy . . . moved around more than most . . . the

Franciscans who travelled even more so . . . ' (p. 11), ' . . . customs gradually petered out' (p. 14), 'the Bible has suffered the same fate of non-usage' (pp. 16-17), and the subject suggested by the title is discussed during five pages (pp. 16-20) explaining that 'without doubt the Psalms are prayer' (p. 16). The purpose of the booklet is to encourage lay-people to make use of the breviary as a prayer-book, without necessarily attempting to recite all of it, and leaving to them the choice of Latin or the vernacular. And this is indeed a good thing. The remainder of the book (pp. 21-40) is an analysis of each part of the Office for a beginner. The explanation is much more elementary than Lancelot Sheppard's 56 pages devoted to a detailed examination of each hour.

Finally we have a book from America, reproduced (with American typography) in England. Fr McManus is a canon lawyer from the Catholic University and in his *Handbook for the New Rubrics* he sets out to provide 'a practical guide'. The greater part of the book is a re-telling of the new rubrics in a more conversational manner, preceded by some short notes on liturgical changes in recent years, especially since 1955, and interspersed with occasional references to the previous rubrics for comparison, the calendar, for instance, being given with the old ranks alongside. Local American feasts are included, but not (perhaps naturally) local English feasts (as St George I class), though there is a reference to British usage of the phrase 'High Mass' (p. 109), which in America means a Sung mass. For many readers the actual Vatican decree will be a more manageable book, with its first-class index, while Fr McManus does no more in this direction than to refer (on p. 1) to that index. Others, for whom the reading of rubrics is hard going, may find this book a little easier.

SEBASTIAN BULLOUGH, O.P.

THE EARLY CHRISTIANS, by Michael Gough; Thames and Hudson, 30s.

THE AGE OF ATILA, by C. D. Gordon; University of Michigan Press, \$3.95.

The attractively presented series *Ancient Peoples and Places* includes some very good volumes and some rather indifferent ones. The plan which they follow is dictated inevitably by the antiquity of the peoples concerned, and the excavated nature of their places. A catalogue of archaeological discoveries and *objets d'art* is linked into a sequence by passages of a history that is sometimes so ancient as to be quite legendary. This was very much the case, for instance, with the de Paors' book on early Christian Ireland. Mr Gough is fortunate in having to deal with a thoroughly factual history of persecutions and heresies. Of the two parts into which his book naturally falls, the second (from Constantine to Justinian) is perhaps less satisfactory than the first (pre-Constantine) because the heresies are summarised at times too schematically. It is admittedly a great thing that Mr Gough's exposition of these confusing controversies does not bore us, but at times one is suspicious of over-simplification.

When we have assimilated the background of persecution and heresy, the

text and the excellent plans and photographs take us into the evolution of basilica building, and reveal the wide range of manifestations of Christian art. Unlike the art of Scythians or Seljuks, early Christian art belongs not to one people or to one culture, but to a whole world. This is quite obvious of course, but one does not get the full impact of what it implies until a book like Mr Gough's points out how the same iconographic scheme is used from Dura Europos to Eynsford in Kent. *The Early Christians* brings out remarkably well the way in which art can testify to one Lord, one faith, and one baptism. The book is in itself a plea that we return to our origins in art, just as we are doing in liturgy and theology. How appalling it is, for instance, that the Lateran Good Shepherd cannot be had in replica anywhere in Rome, where so many dreadful things are sold as *oggetti sacri*.

A fascinating chronicle of another kind, but very much related to the history of early Christianity, is Professor Gordon's *Age of Attila*. Mr Gough's book ends with the triumph of Justinian who, besides immortalizing himself in the Ravenna mosaics, put an end to the Ostrogothic kingdom of Theodoric. From the death of Theodosius I in 395 to Theodoric's conquest of Italy in 495, the barbarian assault on the western empire was watched apprehensively from Byzantium, and chronicled by its historians. Professor Gordon has translated the more or less fragmentary records of Candidus, Malchus, Priscus and others, so as to form a running commentary on the successive waves of invasion. The personality of Attila, with his contempt for civilized values, his austere self-satisfaction with the Hunnish way of life, and his childish obsession with gold, was something which they found horrifyingly interesting. A 'spectacle of decay and defeat' indeed, and not designed to be read for mere idle pleasure.

GEOFFREY WEBB